

AS VETERAN CRUSADERS ORGANIZE



An increase in activities designed to promote the cause of religion is essential in the present emergency, it was declared at the first national meeting of the Veteran Members of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, in Cincinnati, January 10-11. President of the newly formed National Board of Veteran Crusaders is Martin Moll, Jr., of Rochester, N. Y., seated, front row, center. At the left is Margaret Barry, of Baltimore, secretary of the meeting and right, Monsignor Edward A. Frising, National Crusade Secretary, (N.C.W.C.)

Rev. Dr. Owen B. McGuire
The Reason Why One Intellectual
Could Not Become A Catholic
Are There Any Such?

Last week I inflicted on the reader a puzzling article occasioned by reading a chapter in Chesterton's Autobiography. As the Editor did not consign it to the waste basket, I am encouraged to make a few remarks on a passage in another chapter of the same interesting volume. It will be found on page 189.

The title of the chapter is "Figures in Fleet Street", and in it Chesterton points a series of charming vignettes of the noisier, hostile or friendly with whom he came into contact in that Mecca of English journalism. He recalls as we all have reason to bewail the decadence of journalism from the time when journalists wrote freely what they thought and believed, to "these later days of the solidification of journalism like everything else, into trusts and monopolies," when "the secret success (he was told) is to study the particular journal (that you) and write what was suitable to it" suitable according to the will and wish of the monopolist paymasters.

Anyway among the characters Chesterton met in Fleet Street was Joseph Stephens "a man of finer spiritual culture and, therefore, of less fame or success, who as I am proud to say, my friend."

THE DIFFICULTY

One day long before Chesterton thought of becoming a Catholic, Johnson Stephens said to him: "The only little difficulty I have about joining the Catholic Church is that I do not think I believe in God. All the rest of the Catholic system is so obviously superior to anything else that I cannot imagine anyone having any doubt about it." And to this Chesterton adds "I remember that he was grimly gratified when I told him, at a later stage of my own beliefs, that real Catholics are intelligent enough to have the same difficulty." Which is true, not because "real Catholics" doubt the existence of God when they are "intelligent"—but because, as Cardinal Newman writes, "ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt, as I understand the subject."

But the point is that this man of finer spiritual culture saw—all "real" and "intelligent" Catholics see—that there is no middle ground between Atheism and Catholicism. And, for the very same reason, there is no middle ground between an acceptance of a belief in the Incarnation and Atheism. For, to believe that there is a God, all-powerful and all-wise, infinite in these two attributes, the creator and merciful Father of all men, to believe further that this God Himself became Man to redeem all men through all time, is to teach us all what we are to believe and what we are to do in order to have part in His Redemption and to save our souls by living and doing what he has taught us to believe all this (which is nothing else than to believe in

God and in the Incarnation) and then to believe that He has left us no certain (and, therefore, infallible) means of knowing His will, of knowing what we are to believe and to do, this is a manifest contradiction. And the human mind when freed from prejudices and prepossessions abhors contradictions.

MEANS TO KNOWLEDGE

If we believe in the Incarnation and in the sacrifice of Calvary, in other words, if we believe in Christ the Redeemer of all men, we must believe that He has left us a means by which we in 1942 can be as certain of His will, of what He expects us to believe and to do, as were those who listened to His words on the shore of Genesareth or who stood by the cross on Calvary and were witnesses of His Resurrection.

This means, as St. Thomas Aquinas would say, we call the Catholic Church.

I have said before in this column but there are some things we cannot repeat too often—let us thank God that we are Catholics; and let us develop a spirit of charity and prayerfulness for the many who are not so blest, and have to grope for the truth through a multitude of difficulties.

Johnson Stephens remark raises the question: Are there many to whom the difficulty of accepting Catholicism presents itself in that way? Personally, I believe that in these days there are many; for in these days we have already arrived at that stage of "the disintegrating intellectual process" so clearly foreseen by Cardinal Newman when he wrote the Apologia 78 years ago: "In these latter days," he wrote "outside the Catholic Church things are tending with far greater rapidity than in that old time to Atheism in one shape or other." I have no doubt, for instance, that if this question were put to such intellectuals as Aldous Huxley: "Supposing you did believe in a personal God, what system of religion would you consider obviously right and obviously superior to anything else," he would answer: Catholicism. But such men do not put to themselves that question; and if they do (and it may be assumed that it does intrude itself in their meditations), they do not wish to have their answer made public.

OBSTACLES CITED

It would, however, be an error to assume that it is the difficulty of believing in God that prevents men of such intellectual calibre from accepting Catholicism. There are the traditional prejudices which debar them from studying what Catholicism really is.

It must be remembered also that while there are many paths that lead up to the door of the Catholic Church, it is only the grace of God that opens the door and leads the wanderer in; and once within he recognizes that he is in his Father's house and is amazed at the futility of the diff-

CENTRAL VECIM SESSIONS
IN ST. LOUIS AUG. 22-26

ST. LOUIS. (NC) —This city, headquarters of the Catholic Central Vercin's Central Bureau, or "social service workshop," will be the scene of the Central Vercin's national convention this year, Aug. 22-26.

The last national convention of the Central Vercin to be held here was in 1932.

cauties that kept him out so long. This is the confessed experience of all converts. It may be said that the final requirement for entrance is humility, the humble spirit by which the wanderer acknowledges that he is not self-sufficient, that he needs help, that he needs light. The prayer for light which follows that humble acknowledgment will always be heard and answered by a merciful Father. Conversely, the pride of intellect and the consequent failure to pray for light are usually the great obstacles.

For one thing, however, we have reason to rejoice. As the clouds of prejudice and calumny raised by the religious Revolt of the sixteenth century disperse, there is a growing number of serious men, deep thinkers coming to see that the Catholic system of philosophy and theology is the only consistent system. These are found in America and England, especially in England. They are not Atheists. They are nominally Christians and have retained some fragments of the traditional faith of Christendom, the faith that made our Christian civilization. Those of this class who have entered the fold give to the Catholic Church in England a prestige far in advance of its numbers.

WM. F. and S. GEO. SHAFER
 Formerly President and Vice-president of MENC. & SHAFER

Act Quickly

If You Would Save Immensely in This

January

FUR SALE

With Most Fur Coats Mostly Within the Very Low Price Range of

\$66 to \$395

(Prices Include Tax)



Charge Accounts Budget Accounts

The January has been a record-breaker for us, we come down towards the end of the month with complete stocks, assuring the tremendous advantage of better selection as well as greater savings on the best of furs.

SHAFER CO.

STONE 18
 STONE 125

51 East Ave.

HEATING OUR HOME WAS NEVER SO EASY
UNTIL WE 'blue coal'
CHANGED TO



You too, can have steadier, healthier, money-saving heat this EASY way!

Why heat your home the hard way when you can use 'blue coal' and take things easy? 'blue coal' is top quality Pennsylvania hard coal... scientifically prepared to give all-around heating comfort, without a lot of fussing with the furnace. So if you want sure protection for family health, freedom from furnace chores, and real money-saving heat, fill your bin with 'blue coal' now.

FOR 'blue coal' AND FREE HEATING SERVICE, PHONE US TODAY!

DREXLER COAL CO., INC.
 540 Lake Ave.—Glen 54
 Holy Rosary Parish

FRIEDMAN, JOHN A.
 1148 Jay St.—Gen 5319
 Holy Family Parish

HAMMER FUEL CO.
 392 Thurston Rd.—Gen. 414
 St. Augustine Parish

LINDER, ALBERT J.
 32 Fairgate St.—Gen. 6953
 Holy Family Parish

McINTOSH BOTT, INC.
 410 Conkey Ave.—Glen 3326
 St. Margaret Mary's

PASCH, AUGUST COAL CO.
 515 Clinton N.—Main 368
 St. Bridget's Parish

\$12.85
 cash per ton.
STOVE, EGG and NUT Sizes
PEA—\$10.85
 Prices Subject to Change Without Notice.

PRENNER, L. & SON
 1511 Main E.—Cld 1046
 Corpus Christi Parish

RING FUEL CO.
 1600 Dewey Ave.—Glen 1748
 Sacred Heart Parish

ROCHESTER ICE & COLD STORAGE UTILITIES, INC.
 55 Canterbury Rd.—Monroe 8700
 Blessed Sacrament Parish

A B C FUELS, INC.
 407 Chili Ave.—Gen. 7500
 St. Augustine's Parish

BAETZEL, FRED
 68 Broad St.—Main 1508
 St. Peter and Paul's Parish

blue coal THE DEFENDABLE FUEL SOLD ONLY BY THE ABOVE LISTED DEALERS